



Security Council

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**Letter dated 5 April 2000 from the Permanent Representative of
Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the President of the
Security Council**

I have the honour to transmit to you the final communiqué of the Technical Consultative Symposium on the Somali Peace Process, held in Djibouti from 21 to 30 March 2000 (see annex).

I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Roble Oihaye
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex

Final communiqué of the Technical Consultative Symposium on the Somali Peace Process, Djibouti, 21-30 March 2000

A Technical Consultative Symposium on the Djibouti-initiated Somali Peace Process was held in Djibouti from 21 to 30 March 2000. Ismaïl Omar Guelleh, President of Djibouti, opened the symposium which was attended by over 60 intellectuals and peace activists from Somalia and the diaspora.

This is the first inclusive civil society-based peace initiative of its kind. The people of Djibouti, its Government and President Guelleh played a facilitating role. This combination of our neighbour's genuine commitment and civil society's ownership of the symposium made this a unique and valuable turning point in the search for peace and reconstruction. A congenial atmosphere was created that provided a sound basis for the ongoing consultations. The Djibouti-led initiative is a process rather than an event.

The participants view this symposium as a major step forward in the implementation of the Djibouti peace plan. The purpose of the meeting was to provide the Government of Djibouti with informed technical advice on certain issues crucial to the Somali peace process in general and the forthcoming National Peace Conference in particular. The challenges that lie ahead include the modalities of a national transitional authority and the issue of participation in a transitional national assembly.

Those who dominated Somali political leadership by means of excessive force replaced Somali's conciliatory culture with a politics of distrust premised on the violent resolution of social conflict. The Djibouti initiative is aimed at recovering that old tradition. Consequently, civil society and marginalized groups are the major actors in this new process. Somalis registered their support for this peace initiative. Demonstrations throughout the country attest to the people's desire for an open and non-violent political order.

Having considered the relentless efforts towards peace and rehabilitation in Somalia over the last decade by the international community, the participants gratefully acknowledge its endeavour. The role of the international community in the Somali peace process is important and crucial. The fact must be underscored

that external actors have a critical constructive or destructive role to play, given Somalia's condition.

In this context, we wish to voice our sincere gratitude to the international community for its sustained support to the Djibouti-led peace initiative. We suggest that parallel initiatives to the Djibouti peace process are counterproductive. Any parallel initiatives will fail the Somali cause. We urge the United Nations, the European Union, the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to redouble their support for the Djibouti initiative. We fully support the United Nations position as articulated by Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun at the opening ceremony. The United Nations position rejects parallel initiatives and building blocs, and supports Djibouti's inclusive and civil society-based approach to Somalia's reconstruction.

Finally, we call upon all sections of the Somali people to seize this rare opportunity offered by their brothers and sisters in Djibouti and urge them to translate this promise into reality and to prepare for the upcoming all-inclusive National Peace Conference. Let us join this historic march and take part in this campaign of fund-raising and social mobilization in order to meet the challenges of the new millennium.

We, the participants, express our heartfelt gratitude to the people of Djibouti, and its Government and President for their genuine concern for our fate. We are moved by their hospitality and selflessness.

The participants recommend that:

(a) The national conference be open to all Somalis who want to bring peace, progress and speedy reconstruction to our land;

(b) There is a need to consider an extension of the time-frame of the conference so as to allow Somalis to fully prepare for the conference, and to do the necessary groundwork for the general conference.